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SECURITY COUNCIL
Fiftieth year

Letter dated 8 September 1995 from the representatives of France, Germany, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

We have the honour to transmit to you the text of the Joint Statement and Agreed Basic Principles signed on 8 September 1995 at Geneva by the Foreign Minister of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Foreign Minister of the Republic of Croatia and the Foreign Minister of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and witnessed by representatives of France, Germany, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America, and by the European Union Special Negotiator for the Former Yugoslavia (see annexes I and II).

We would be grateful if you would have the present document circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under item 28 of the provisional agenda, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Jean-Bernard MERIMEE
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of
France to the United Nations

(Signed) Tono EITEL
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of
Germany to the United Nations

(Signed) Sergei V. LAVROV
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of
the Russian Federation to
the United Nations

(Signed) Sir John WESTON
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of
the United Kingdom to the
United Nations

(Signed) Edward W. GNEHM
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent
Mission of the United States of America

* A/50/150.

ANNEX I

Joint statement signed on 8 September 1995 at Geneva

We have just concluded a meeting, held under the auspices of the Contact Group, of the Foreign Ministers of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Bosnia and Herzegovina), the Republic of Croatia (Croatia) and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Yugoslavia).

The Contact Group announces today that the three Foreign Ministers, speaking for their Governments - the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina; the Republic of Croatia; and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, which also represents the Bosnian Serbs in a joint delegation - have authorized us to issue the attached Agreed Basic Principles. All three Governments - and their Presidents - agree that these principles will govern the difficult negotiations to come, and all agreed, after some tough discussions, to the exact words of this important statement. With regard to Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Srijem, the Co-Chairmen are committed to a solution as part of an overall peace settlement and will make it a top priority when they return to the region next week.

The statement takes us an important step closer to peace. Yet, important as it is, this statement does not constitute the end of the tragedy in the Balkans. Far from it. Significant differences exist between the sides - differences that will require continued intense negotiations. We will return to our respective capitals tonight for consultations. Next week Assistant Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke and European Union Special Negotiator for the Former Yugoslavia Carl Bildt will return to the region with their delegations, and tomorrow First Deputy Minister Igor Ivanov of the Russian Federation will go to Belgrade.

The Contact Group will meet again at Geneva next week at the Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations. Subsequent meetings will be held in Moscow and in an expanded format in Rome. Following yesterday's important meeting in Paris, we have also been consulting closely with the representative of the Organization of the Islamic Conference and will continue to do so within an institutionalized coordinating structure.

The statement we are issuing today is an important milestone in the search for peace. Today's statement contains many significant points. Within its current internationally recognized borders, it is agreed that Bosnia and Herzegovina will be comprised of two democratic entities, the existing Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republica Srpska. Bosnian territory will be divided - the Federation with 51 per cent and the Serbian entity with 49 per cent. They also agreed today to create a commission to enforce accepted international human rights standards within their territories. They agreed to allow freedom of movement within Bosnia's borders and allow displaced persons to return to their homes. Each entity will be self-governing, with its own constitution. While the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina will continue, additional joint institutions at the level of Bosnia and Herzegovina are envisioned.

Clearly much remains to be done. The hardest work still lies ahead. The entities have yet to develop a design for a central connecting structure to oversee the agreed cooperative efforts and to elaborate other joint efforts in areas where cooperation is the only way to solve common problems. In addition, the parties need to define their internal borders within Bosnia in accordance with the 51-49 principle. We should be under no illusions that these will be easy tasks; they can be solved only through intense negotiations backed by a genuine desire to achieve peace. Finally, any agreement must be implemented by all sides, and this could be the hardest part.

The attached Basic Principles have been agreed upon today by H.E. Mr. Muhamed Sacirbey, Foreign Minister of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Bosnia and Herzegovina); H.E. Mr. Mate Granic, Foreign Minister of the Republic of Croatia (Croatia); and H.E. Mr. Milan Milutinovic, Foreign Minister of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Yugoslavia), and witnessed by representatives of France, Germany, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America, and by the European Union Special Negotiator for the Former Yugoslavia.

ANNEX II

Agreed Basic Principles signed on 8 September 1995 at Geneva

Text of principles agreed to Friday at Geneva as the basis for talks on ending the war in Bosnia:

Agreed Basic Principles

1. Bosnia and Herzegovina will continue its legal existence with its present borders and continuing international recognition.

2. Bosnia and Herzegovina will consist of two entities, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina as established by the Washington Agreements, and the Republica Srpska (RS).

2.1 The 51:49 parameter of the territorial proposal of the Contact Group is the basis for a settlement. This territorial proposal is open for adjustment by mutual agreement.

2.2 Each entity will continue to exist under its present constitution (amended to accommodate these basic principles).

2.3 Both entities will have the right to establish parallel special relationships with neighbouring countries, consistent with the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

2.4 The two entities will enter into reciprocal commitments (a) to hold complete elections under international auspices; (b) to adopt and adhere to normal international human rights standards and obligations, including the obligation to allow freedom of movement and enable displaced persons to repossess their homes or receive just compensation; and (c) to engage in binding arbitration to resolve disputes between them.

3. The entities have agreed in principle to the following:

3.1 The appointment of a Commission for Displaced Persons authorized to enforce (with assistance from international entities) the obligations of both entities to enable displaced persons to repossess their homes or receive just compensation.

3.2 The establishment of a Bosnia and Herzegovina Human Rights Commission, to enforce the entities' human rights obligations. The two entities will abide by the Commission's decisions.

3.3 The establishment of joint Bosnia and Herzegovina public corporations, financed by the two entities, to own and operate transportation and other facilities for the benefit of both entities.

3.4 The appointment of a Commission to Preserve National Monuments.

3.5 The design and implementation of a system of arbitration for the solution of disputes between the two entities.